

Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code: Self-assessment form

Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code			
1	Definition of a complaint	Yes	No
	Does the complaints process use the following definition of a complaint?	✓	
	Does the policy have exclusions where a complaint will not be considered?	✓	
	Are these exclusions reasonable and fair to residents? Evidence relied upon	✓ Exclusions in the Corporate Complaints Policy. Advice given at contact points.	
2	Accessibility		
	Are multiple accessibility routes available for residents to make a complaint?	✓	
	Is the complaints policy and procedure available online?	✓	
	Do we have a reasonable adjustments policy?	✓ Accessibility pages and statement website www.islington.gov.uk/accessibility	
	Do we regularly advise residents about our complaints process?	✓	
3	Complaints team and process		

	Is there a complaint officer or equivalent in post?	✓	
	Does the complaint officer have autonomy to resolve complaints?	✓	
	Does the complaint officer have authority to compel engagement from other departments to resolve disputes?	✓	
	If there is a third stage to the complaints procedure are residents involved in the decision making?	There are three points in the complaints policy where residents can get involved, Stage one/ Stage one Review and Chief Executive stage (stage2).	
	Is any third stage optional for residents?	N/A	
	Does the final stage response set out residents' right to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service?	✓	
	Do we keep a record of complaint correspondence including correspondence from the resident?	✓	
	At what stage are most complaints resolved?	Stage 1	
4	Communication		
	Are residents kept informed and updated during the complaints process?	✓	
	Are residents informed of the landlord's position and given a chance to respond and challenge any area of dispute before the final decision?	✓	
	Are all complaints acknowledged and logged within five days?	✓	
	Are residents advised of how to escalate at the end of each stage?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage one?	2019/20, 94%	
	What proportion of complaints are resolved at stage two?	2019/20, 70%	
	What proportion of complaint responses are sent within Code timescales? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage one • <u>Stage one (with extension)</u> 	2019/20, 90%	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage two <u>Stage two (with extension)</u> 	98%	
	Where timescales have been extended did we have good reason?	✓	
	Where timescales have been extended did we keep the resident informed?	✓	
	What proportion of complaints do we resolve to residents' satisfaction	2019/20 95%	
5	Cooperation with Housing Ombudsman Service		
	Were all requests for evidence responded to within 15 days?	✓	
	Where the timescale was extended did we keep the Ombudsman informed?	✓	
6	Fairness in complaint handling		
	Are residents able to complain via a representative throughout?	✓	
	If advice was given, was this accurate and easy to understand?	✓	
	How many cases did we refuse to escalate?	No stats for 2019/20	
	What was the reason for the refusal?	No information for 2019/20	
	Did we explain our decision to the resident?	N/A	
7	Outcomes and remedies		
	Where something has gone wrong are we taking appropriate steps to put things right?	✓	
8	Continuous learning and improvement		
	What improvements have we made as a result of learning from complaints?	Clarity on complainant's rights to go to the Housing Ombudsman after accepting compensation offered at the end of the council's complaints process.	

		<p>Policy change to compensation for gas service failures, previously a resident would be compensated if the service was out for more than 21 days. Following meetings and discussions, because of complaints this has changed to '5 days'. This is very significant, in improving response times and especially for vulnerable residents.</p> <p>To help provide a better service to vulnerable residents with hearing issues; basic sign language training delivered to Repairs Team Leaders for improved communication with residents.</p> <p>Increasing issue at the end of 2019/start of 2020 where residents told us that operatives were arriving with not enough time to complete their works. Identified as a scheduling issue and feedback; since February 2020, one complaint received on this issue.</p>	
	<p>How do we share these lessons with:</p> <p>a) Residents?</p> <p>b) The board/governing body?</p>	<p>Part of the complaint response.</p> <p>Corporate Performance data</p>	

	<p>c) In the Annual Report?</p>	<p>Quarterly Political Leadership Meeting (PLM) upheld cases only.</p> <p>Quarterly Board meeting</p> <p>Yearly report to Audit committee</p>	
	<p>Has the Code made a difference to how we respond to complaints?</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Overall, our Corporate Complaints Policy and practices meet the standard of the Housing Ombudsman Code. The code will confirm our commitment to good complaint handling as we make improvements to our service delivery and communication with residents. The code will act as a learning tool and reference guide for all complaint teams to ensure compliance. A new quarterly complaint-handling meeting established for continuous review of performance against the self- assessment and impact on complaint responses.</p>	
	<p>What changes have we made?</p>	<p>Housing Ombudsman definition incorporated in Corporate Complaints Policy.</p> <p>Detailed signposting for exclusions under the Corporate Complaints Policy.</p>	